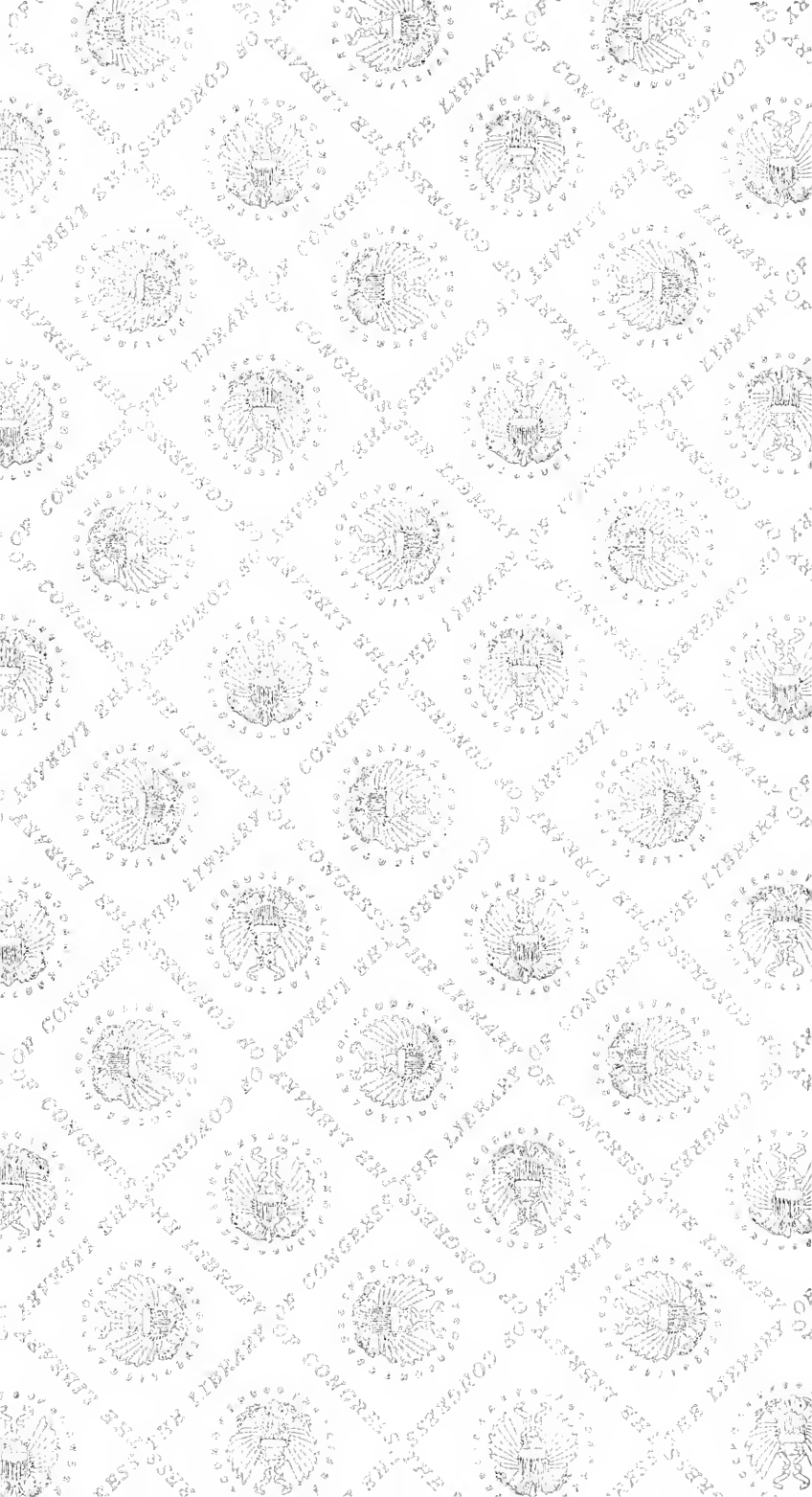


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STATE OF THE UNION.

SPEECH

OF THE

HON. E. P. WALTON, OF VERMONT,

UPON THE REPORT OF THE

COMMITTEE OF THIRTY-THREE UPON THE STATE OF THE UNION

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 16, 1861.

The House having under consideration the report from the select committee of thirty-three—

Mr. WALTON said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The events of the last ninety days show that the Federal Government is still an experiment, and perhaps as doubtful now as it was when Washington declared, in his first inaugural address, that "the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people." It has successfully resisted all assaults from without, and stimulated within a growth of civilization, material wealth, and moral power unparalleled in any nation or age of the world. It has multiplied the population of the nation by ten, and its productive power by more than ten times ten; it has extended its domain from ocean to ocean, and brought the scepter of commercial supremacy within its grasp; and for the freedom of its people, the novelty of its political machinery, and the brilliancy of its results, it has commanded universal admiration and respect. And now, while at peace with all abroad, and but for the wretched, and we may hope temporary, consequences of maladministration of the Government, prosperous at home, we are threatened with an instant and utter failure of the experiment which Washington inaugurated, and with the instant and utter wreck of the empire which he founded. It is national death; it is death to our power, security and grandeur; it is death to our national name and fame; and a million deaths, it may be, through anarchy and civil war.

For more than a century, South Carolina has deliberately and persistently aimed at the destruction of the Union; and this design was not more monstrous in iniquity than it has been masterly in execution. The great statesman who first conceived it saw the end from the beginning, shaped the means to the end, and so sagaciously shaped them that the very virtues of the people, and that patriotism which he offended, have been made instruments for his work. By the assertion of new and strange pro-slavery principles, at first repulsed by everybody, but ultimately carried out, in a large degree, by the annexation of Texas, the Mexican war, the fugitive slave law of 1850, the Kansas and Nebraska act of 1854, the repudiation of the Missouri compromise,

and the raid upon Kansas: by pro-slavery agitation and pro-slavery acts—the South was seduced on the one hand, and the North repelled on the other, until all the old national parties were demolished, and the North and the South politically divided by a sectional line. The Whig party in the South was blotted out in 1852; the Democratic party of the North was divided, and the Whig party of the North blotted out in 1856; the Democratic party of the North was deliberately assassinated by its southern allies in the spring of 1860; and thus was secured the fore-ordained triumph of the Republican party in November last. Aye, fore-ordained; prayed for, labored for, waited for, and rejoiced at by the plotters of disunion, and by none more heartily and sincerely. The election of Abraham Lincoln was not the reason, but the occasion, for disunion; and the occasion was instantly and impatiently improved by ordinances of secession.

The Government here had ample warnings of the designs of the conspirators; and but for the neglect of the Executive, the secessions of this day might have been as harmless as were the nullification of South Carolina in 1832, and her secession in 1852. The President was warned by avowals of the secessionists; and as early as October last he was specially warned by the highest officer of the Government in military rank, and the peer of the highest in the world in military reputation, of the dangers to which the country was exposed, and of the remedy within his reach. Warnings were neglected; treason lurked in the Cabinet, under the very eye of the President, and revealed through the Executive Departments. The Army was dispersed in distant Territories, and the Navy in distant seas; the loyal North was disarmed to arm the disloyal South; and the Treasury was depleted to rob the Government itself of the means of defense. The preparations for secession, rebellion, and treason were effectively made, and nowhere more effectively than in the Executive Departments at this capital. State after State has seceded; our forts, arsenals, magazines, hospitals, post offices, custom-houses, mints, and money, have been seized; the Constitution and laws of the United States have been violated, and the power of the nation defied. The President has notified us of these events in message after message. I think (he tells us) this is very wrong in the southern people, and the northern people are very much to be blamed for it. I regret it; I cannot help it; I am impotent.

"The Greeks are strong, and skillful to their strength;
Fierce to their skill, and to their fierceness valiant;
But I am weaker than a woman's tear;
Tamer than sleep; fonder than ignorance;
Less valiant than the virgin in the night;
And skillless as unpractic'd infancy."

The President has failed to use the means that were in his power to defend the Government. Perhaps it ought to be said that he has been deceived and paralyzed by the infidelity of his advisers; but, in any event, he has cast himself upon Congress. Hitherto the eyes of thirty million people are turned, and here the hopes of all the loyal and the patriotic are centred. True it is that here, until a very recent date, they looked and hoped in vain. Congress was as powerless as the Executive. Here, too, was disloyalty to the Federal Government; here no men, and no set of men, able to control the action of the Senate and the House. All that is changed. In this House, at least, the representatives of the Republican party command a majority in numbers; and they must and will be held responsible for all that shall here be done, and all that shall be left undone.

What shall we do? What shall we refuse to do? The answer must depend upon the necessities of the case and the extent of our powers; we must do only what we have the right to do, and what is expedient to be done. Six States have declared that they are no longer under the jurisdiction of this Government; a seventh has withdrawn from the Union conditionally, and others remain conditionally. Six States are now assembled in convention to form a new confederation; and the address of its presiding officer declared the position they contemplated. Said he:

"We meet as representatives of sovereign and independent States, which by their solemn judgments have dissolved all the political associations which connected them with the Government of the United States. It is now a fixed and irrevocable fact that the separation is perfect, complete, and perpetual: and a great duty is now imposed on us to provide a government for our future security and protection. We can and should extend to our sister States, and our late sister States who are identified with us in interest, feelings, and institutions, a cordial invitation to unite in a common destiny, and be desirous at the same time of maintaining with our late confederates friendly relations, political and commercial."

It becomes us first to inquire whether these States are really out of the Union or in it. If they are out, our duties are plain. We are at once to put them on the footing of foreign nations, and I will say of the most favored foreign nations; for neither passion nor prejudice shall ever extinguish the generous sympathies and charities due to children of

a common ancestry. If they are out of the Union, by a separation that is "perfect, complete, and perpetual," then are we absolved from all obligations due to them as members of the Union—to protect them against foreign invasion, and domestic insurrection and rebellion, and to respect and defend their rights as States, and the rights and interests of their inhabitants as citizens of the United States. Our political, commercial, postal, and other laws, have no validity there; our courts and custom-houses and post and land offices are to be closed, the mails suspended, and our and their commerce put upon an entirely different footing. We assume new powers as to them—the treaty-making power, and powers of peace and war. To be sure, it has been argued again and again that we have no power to make war upon a seceding State: but nobody will deny our power to make war upon a foreign State; and it behooves all concerned to remember that there is not a kingdom in the world against which we ever had, or ever can have, stronger or more grievous causes of war than with this *extempore* kingdom of cotton. The seizure of forts, arsenals, magazines, and other property of the United States, by armed men, under the authority of the seceding States, were overt acts of war. The surveillance by arms over the navigation of the Mississippi, and the robbery of the national Treasury by Louisiana, are outrages upon our national rights, for which instant atonement would be demanded from any other nation, backed, if need be, by a thousand cannon and a million bayonets.

But, sir, I will not contemplate the picture or the prospect of actual war, nor even the prospect of two lines of standing armies and threatening forts in two confederacies, stretching one thousand or three thousand miles, from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, or from the Atlantic to the Pacific. I will only add, that if the seceding States are really out of the Union, we have new and urgent duties upon our hands, in the settlement of new, difficult, and all-important questions. The public debt, the public lands, the public buildings, the national ships, the national obligations growing out of public treaties—such, for instance, as those touching the slave trade—the claims of States and citizens of the United States upon the Government: all these topics present questions of the gravest import. The navigation of the Mississippi, and the control of the Gulf of Mexico, is another matter that will permit no delay. And then how will you settle with the seceding States, including an item of \$200,000,000 spent for the purchase and defense of territory now occupied by them? Sir, if these States are out of the Union, let us turn our attention to these questions. There are none graver, none more urgent. If these States are not out of the Union, then the old obligations and powers remain upon us—all of them in full force, all of them unimpaired. Those obligations we are to discharge, and those powers we are to exercise, just so far as the circumstances of the case will admit. I ask, then, are the seceding States out of the Union?

I do not intend to discuss the right of secession or revolution, which has been so largely argued in this debate: for, in my judgment, the matter is completely settled by the Constitution itself. There is no power, express or implied, conferred by the Constitution, upon any department of this Government, to perform the last, the all-essential, and the crowning act of successful secession or revolution; that is, the recognition of the independence of a seceding or revolutionized State. States may secede in fact; they may form independent governments, and receive the recognition of the world; they may resist, and successfully resist this Government; and yet this Government has not the constitutional power to recognize their independence, nor a constitutional right to treat them as independent States. The Constitution was designed not only as a "perfect" Union: it was designed also for "posterity," and therefore as a perpetual Union. Section ten of article one is, throughout, a prohibition of secession, because it is a prohibition to every State of powers essential to an independent nation. The abrogation of the Constitution and laws of the United States is rebellion, and resistance to them by force is treason. A persistence, however long, is but continued rebellion and treason. So far, then, as this Government is concerned, until the new power of recognizing the independence of a rebellious State shall have been constitutionally conferred, we are to refuse such a recognition; to refuse to recognize the agents of seceding or rebellious States; to refuse to enter into a settlement of any of those grave questions to which I have already alluded; and, to the best of our judgment and ability, we are to maintain the sovereignty of the United States, to execute the laws, and bring back the rebellious States to their allegiance to the Constitution, and to their late and madly lost estate of liberty, security, prosperity, and peace.

I confess that I have thought it will be a hard necessity, for the want of constitutional power to acknowledge the independence of a seceding State, to endure a protracted period of anarchy or the horrors of civil war. Perhaps it will be a necessity too hard to

be borne, imperative enough to warrant an assumption of undelegated power, as in the instance of the acquirement of that very Territory which is now the theater of this grievous discontent. But we are not yet warranted to make an assumption like that. The necessity may come; it has not yet come. In spite of the confident declaration of the ex-Secretary of the Treasury, I must deny that the seceding States are yet out of the Union, and still indulge the hope that this declaration, like various other official and equally confident estimates from the same quarter, is altogether too illusive to warrant any assumption of undelegated power. In no instance yet has the ordinance of secession become the act of a State, or been recognized by the sovereign power of a State—I mean the people. The ordinances have been adopted by conventions, elected in the fever of an excitement stimulated by false representations; hastily elected, without mature deliberation, and without a full vote of the people. The constitutions of South Carolina and Florida provide that—

“No convention of the people shall be called, unless by the concurrence of two-thirds of both branches of the whole representation.”

And I am not aware that this provision has been complied with in either State. Be that as it may, I find that in none of the other States are conventions authorized: at all by their constitutions; and in all the seceding States I find that their constitutions can be amended only by enactments of two Legislatures in succession, with from three to six months' notice previous to the election of the second Legislature; or by enactment of the Legislature, three to six months' publication, and a ratification by the people. Yet these conventions, which ordained secession and abrogated the laws of the United States, did also abrogate in part, or change, the constitutions of their States.

Thus, the revolution is twofold; it is a revolution in the States against their constitutions, and a revolution in the United States, and against their allegiance to the Federal Constitution. It is double-distilled rebellion, and in no State has it been ratified by a vote of the people. By the constitutions of their own States, and of the United States, they are not out of the Union yet. By the patriotism and prudence of their people, on a calm review of these revolutionary proceedings, and the sad results already suffered; by their regular and constitutional action, let us hope that these States will yet be declared to be within the Union, redeemed from the usurped power of aspiring demagogues, and purified from their polluting touch. Surely, we may refuse to acknowledge the independence of States which have not yet seceded. At least, until the people of the seceding States have ratified or acquiesced in the revolution that has been attempted, we cannot recognize their independence.

Conciliation, compromise, concessions—for more than sixty days these have been pressed upon us, powerfully and persistently; pressed upon us from without by timid and mistaken friends and bold and avowed enemies; pressed upon us by the first not more to preserve the Union, than by the last to annul the late verdict of the country and destroy the Republican party; but worse than these, pressed upon us for temporary peace, or a temporary policy, at the expense of principles which never can be surrendered; pressed upon us to keep the cotton States within the Union, at the risk of driving the northern States out of it; pressed for the conciliation of rebels who will not be conciliated, at the risk of disaffecting the loyal, who will not be degraded. I know there are men among them who are actuated by nobler motives than some of these, and who do not contemplate consequences such as these.

I know there are good men here, generous, pure, and patriotic men, of almost every section and of every party, who are actuated by the best of motives, and have appealed to us with all the charms of eloquence, enforced by the claims of fraternal affection and the fears of fatal results. Alas! that these have been so few; alas! that among the Representatives of fifteen States, the instances have been so rare that each deserves a monument more lasting than marble. And each will have it, in the memories of all good men:

“They say he is a very man *per se*,
And stands alone.”

Conciliation, forbearance, kindness! Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will accord all these, even to rebels in arms. Christianity demands it; humanity demands it; the ties of blood and the bonds of a common nationality demand it; and I would prove to a wondering world that my country, above all others, responds to such demands as these. Our Government is based, more directly than any other, upon the affections and the will of the people, and it must be more lenient than any other to the mistakes and the offenses of the people. We must appeal from the people mad to the people sane; we must bear and

forbear. As our Government originated, so must it be maintained, by the voluntary and unrestrained will of the people. If it cannot be so maintained, then is our system radically wrong, and destined to certain failure.

Had Ireland rebelled against Great Britain, as seven States have rebelled against the Federal Government—had the rebels seized the port and castle of Dublin, as our ports and forts have been seized—there is no man here who will for a moment doubt the course the British Government would have adopted. In three days a fleet would have been in the port of Dublin; within an hour the rebels would have been summoned to surrender, and, within twelve hours, the city would have submitted or been burnt to the ground. Her remedy would have been force, as it was, within the remembrance of us all, in the last rebellion in Canada; and the most destructive and unsparing force, as it was within this very city and on the very spot on which this building stands. It is ours to vindicate the superiority of republican government; the superiority of justice over force; of humanity over cruelty. It is ours to preserve, and not to destroy; to heal, and not to kill. The task may be difficult; but we have no right to say that it is impossible. It may be that we shall fail; but if we fail in such an endeavor, our system of government is itself a failure.

But I trust we cannot fail; I trust there is for us no such word as fail. The members in that family of States, which compose this nation, need no other remedy than that which, in like circumstances, we apply to members of the domestic family. The rebellious States are but maniacs of a larger size. It is ours to put these maniacs in a straight-jacket; kindly, gently, as we would a revered mother or a darling child; to protect them from harming themselves, as well as from harming us; to administer unpleasant medicines, perhaps, but nevertheless very necessary and very salutary; to nurse them into health and sanity, gently, faithfully, unremittingly; and, at last, (God willing,) through patience and long-suffering, welcome them back, restored and in their right mind, with renewed affections and mutual joy. How madly are the seceding States crushing their own people; how madly crushing the merchants of the North, who have confided in them; how madly would they crush the entire country if they could! The disease is, indeed, madness, and it indicates its own remedy.

Concessions, compromises: a few words on this topic. It has had a prominence beyond all others here, and, perhaps, throughout the country. There are compromises that cannot be made under any circumstances, on any conditions, at any price. You cannot compromise the consciences of the people, or of any considerable portion of the people; you cannot compromise their earnest and honest convictions; you cannot compromise their will. The people are greater than Congress, than conventions, than States, than all the States combined in our Federal system. We may propose; they will dispose. We may attempt to traffic in their names; they will take care of our bargains, and, if need be, take care of us. We cannot compromise liberty; it is above price. We cannot compromise rights, justice, honor; these are not merchantable. Cotton and calico, shoes and sugar, wheat and woollens, can be sold or exchanged; we can make bargains about them; but we can never bargain away the rights of the individuals who produce them. Those rights are to be respected and protected; and the only bargain to be made about them must be complete and mutual, the act of all the parties, and binding upon all—a mutual engagement of each to respect and protect the rights of the other.

There are various conditions absolutely essential to such a compromise. The parties must be present, in person or by representatives; they must stand on an equal footing and with equal powers; they must act voluntarily and freely upon their own judgments, unswayed by passion and unawed by threats; and throughout their act there must be equivalents to sanctify it by justice to all the parties. Such a compromise—voluntary, mutual, complete, and just—will be ratified and respected, or enforced. It will stand against all the assaults of sectional interests, political insanity, and armed rebellion. I will not say that the people I represent will reject a compromise like that. They will voluntarily do anything that, in their judgment, is right and necessary to be done; they will never be forced to do anything that is wrong. I will not say that such a compromise is impossible; but I do believe that it is utterly impossible now. It is a work of time; it will demand examination, deliberation, debate, with all patience and wisdom. We are not prepared for the work, and the country is not prepared for it. Present events may be preparatory, and possibly the best preparation. If existing dangers shall not be averted, they will indicate the necessity and the gravity of the work. These dangers warn us, and warn the States and the people, to work wisely, as those who are responsible for a nation's fate—not hastily, not rashly, not cowardly.

Such a compromise is impossible now, because the necessary conditions are all wanting—every one is wanting. The parties are not here. For more than sixty days a committee of this House has been hunting up grievances and concocting compromises; and with the knowledge of that fact, and in spite of it, State after State has wheeled into the march of secession and rebellion; their Representatives have withdrawn from the committee and from the Capitol, and Congress has been stripped, by their act, of the power to redress their grievances. With their votes, any congressional act could now be carried through both Houses, over every Republican in either branch; and, with the aid of Representatives from the border free States and the commercial cities of the North, they might now carry, by a two-thirds vote, reasonable propositions for amendments to the Constitution. As the Senate and House now stand, a two-thirds vote cannot be had for any propositions broad enough to settle the questions in dispute. If the present projects fail, as I believe they will, they will fail because the very States you would conciliate have willfully and contemptuously closed the door against concessions. Again: the contracting parties to a compromise cannot stand here with equal powers, because the seceding States are not represented here at all; and the Representatives of the remaining States cannot freely act, because they are forced to act under a more than half-executed threat of disunion and war, if they do not surrender without a single condition to save either their honor or their rights. The disaffected States that still remain stand in a position hardly less repulsive. I know they have loyal men here, as true at heart as the truest, and as good as the best. They do not threaten, but plead; they have no malice, but overflow with fraternal affection; they have no passion but a passionate love for the Union; and yet their affectionate and passionate plea is, compromise or secession. Not that they will secede if they can help it, but that their States will secede. The ultimatum of the seceders was, submission or disunion. In effect, the propositions are identical, however wide may be the difference in the spirit of those who propose them. Practically, they are one; and it is the highwayman's demand—"your money or your life."

Now, sir, were all the other conditions of an effective compromise complied with; were the parties here and agreed, as they are not; were the propositions complete in equivalents, and perfect in justice, as they are not, yet I would not dare to accept them under a threat. Who threaten? Not one-third of the freemen of the nation, and not one-half of the States. Who are threatened? Two-thirds of the people, a majority of the States, and the Federal Government which represents the whole. It is a submission of the majority to the minority; and that is a subversion of the democratic principle of Government. It is a submission of the Government to rebellion; and that is demoralization and degradation of the Government. It is more: it is licensed rebellion for all future time. It is a proclamation to the world of the perpetual insecurity of the Government and the Union; insecurity of public credit; insecurity of treaty obligations; insecurity of peace; insecurity of commerce; insecurity of the States and the people, and insecurity of all their vast and varied interests. It is a total failure in the first object of all Government, to wit: security to the governed. It is a total failure of the American experiment. For one, I will refuse it, and risk the consequences of refusal. It is more dangerous to surrender to rebellion than to resist it.

A compromise under such circumstances, and with such possible consequences, is a work to be refused by the present Congress. Indeed, the day for congressional compromises is past. We have learned, by sad experience, that they are neither binding nor irrevocable, and are forced to resort to constitutional and permanent guarantees. If it be admitted that Congress has the power to initiate these, it must also be admitted that Congress and the States are not now in a proper condition for the work. The States and the people are in no temper to warrant expectations of submission either on the one side or the other—in no temper to deliberate. They will not and cannot deliberate under mutual threats, and mutual outrages, perhaps, and in the reign of anarchy and violence. Human nature itself is against it.

Washington has taught us the lesson of the day in that address from which I have already quoted. Let us reverently listen to it:

"Having thus imparted to you my sentiments as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave, but not without resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race in humble supplication that, since He has been pleased to favor the American people with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquility, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity, on a form of government for the security of their Union, and the advancement of their happiness, so His divine blessing may be equally conspicuous in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures, on which the success of this Government may depend."

Thus was the Constitution formed; thus must it be revised or amended. By no com-

mittee of thirty-three gentlemen of this House, however patriotic or wise; by no decree of partisans, such as we are, selected for other purposes, and overburdened with other duties; and by no snap-judgment of the popular will, inflamed by all the passions of party, maddened by the crimes, and distressed by the consequences of rebellion and treason. No, sir: no. This is not the time or the mode to settle a question for all time. There is a better: it is constitutional; it is feasible; it may possibly be accepted with unanimity by all parties and by all the States; it is a remedy within the reach of the States: let the States consider it. It is a convention called under all the provisions and bound by all the restrictions of article five of the Constitution, and with ample power to report a revised Constitution or amendments, and even, if need be, to submit an ordinance for the separation of the Union and the construction of new confederacies. It will give time—the best medicine for these diseases of the body-politic; it will give opportunity for the redress of all grievances, northern or southern; and it will give to the seceding States the only mode of relieving their present position without mortification or dishonor. I would leave it to the States, following the honorable lead of Kentucky, to call for such a tribunal; and I would leave all matters in dispute, all compromises, all contingencies, to that tribunal, and to the final judgment of the people or the States.

We have other and pressing duties, and first, to preserve this capital, the archives of the Government, and all the public property. Not that I regard it as indispensable to retain this District as the capital or the province of a northern confederacy, in the event of a separation of the free and slave States. Were Maryland to go, with Annapolis hallowed by a material event in the life of Washington, and Virginia with his tomb, I could surrender even the city that bears his name. The people of the north will forever remember and revere him without a monument; at least without one of these, which shall thenceforth mark not so much his fame as the eternal shame of those who have been recreant to his teachings, and the destroyers of his work.

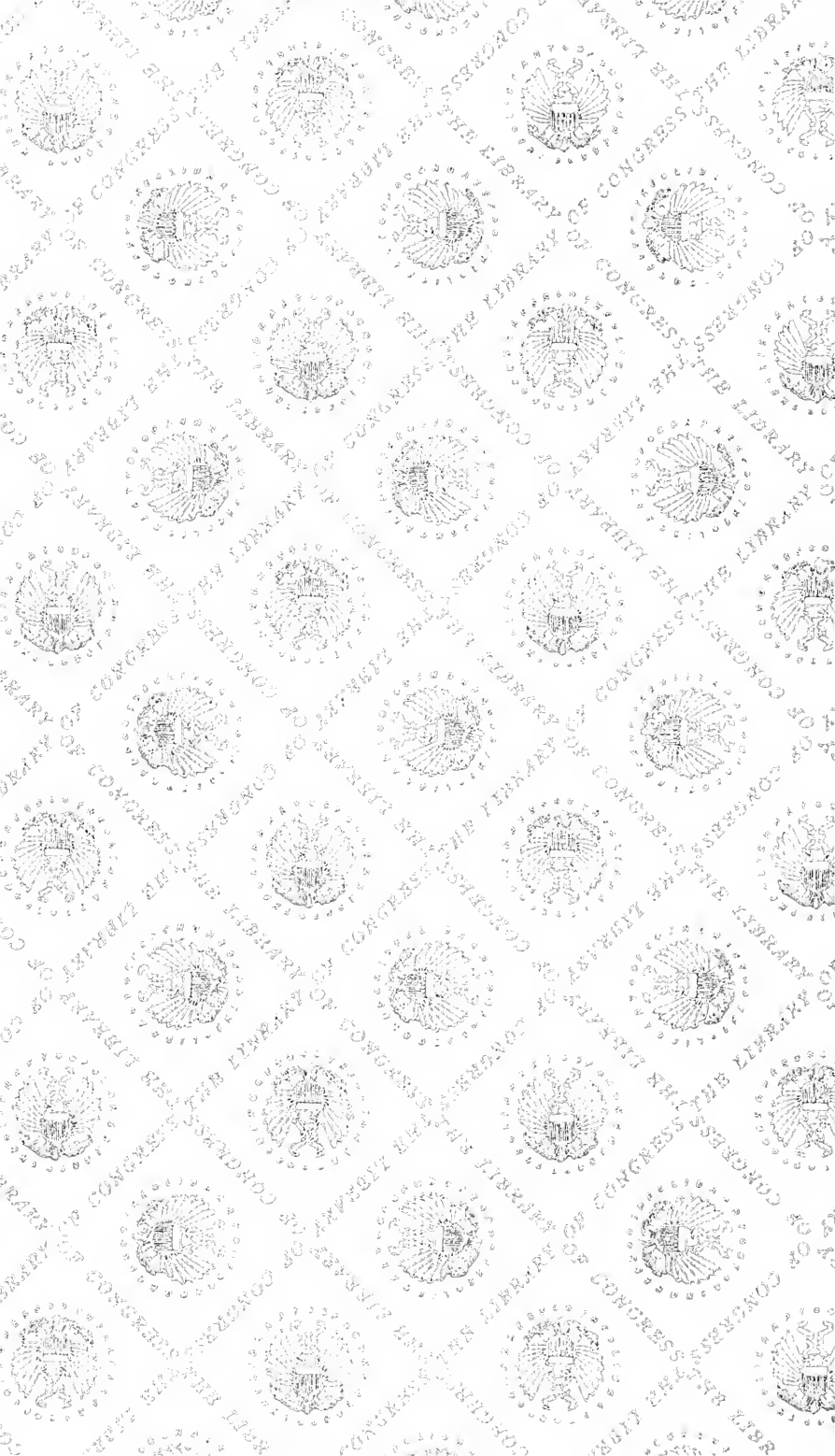
This capital must be preserved, not so much for the sake of public and private property to the amount of many millions, as for the rights of every State, and the interests of all the people. Dissolve this Union into two or twenty confederacies, and yet there shall not be one that can afford to lose this capital. It is much to say that here are records essential to every State—of its history, its services, its glory; but it is more to say that here are the records of its rights and obligations. The State Department, with its records of all our national rights and obligations; the Treasury Department, with its records of commerce and navigation, of revenue and expenditure, of the national debt, which somebody has got to pay, of debts which have been, and of proofs of claims of citizens of every State and Territory which ought to be paid; the War and Navy Departments, with all the records of the services of States, and of citizens of every State, and of expenditures in all past time for every State and Territory; the Post Office Department, with all its records, which will be as essential in the future administration of the postal service as the present, however numerous may be the confederacies to be served; and the vast Interior Department, with its Patent, Land, and Pension Offices—its bureaus of Indian Affairs and of Agriculture—its records and proofs of the generous cessions of public lands by the old thirteen States—its records and proofs of land titles in all the land States and Territories—and its records of patents, of the census, and of the public buildings: all these must be preserved at any hazard and at any cost. The seceding States cannot afford their destruction or mutilation; the remaining States cannot afford it; the people cannot afford it; for in any event—Union or disunion—these are the strongest bonds of justice and peace: and the Administration that will not defend and preserve them, will be treacherous to the sacred rights of all the States and all the people.

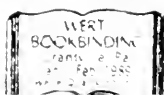
Next, we must have a Government here, with the will, the power, and the means to assert all its constitutional rights and discharge all its duties, in the extraordinary complications of domestic and foreign questions in which it is now involved. With such a Government four months ago, these complications would have been prevented. The new Government must grapple with them all, with brave and loyal hearts, though it be with unpracticed hands. It will need infinite wisdom; may God give it! It will need extraordinary powers and remedies; these it is for us to give. Herein is our duty: to preserve the Government, not to pamper rebellion against it; to preserve its dignity and authority, not to bring them into contempt; to maintain the Constitution unimpaired, not to disfigure it with hasty patch-work; to save, if it be possible, the peace of the country, not to plunge it into war; to save the business of the country, and secure the regular pursuits of agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, not to blast them all by anarchy; and to preserve (God willing) the Union of the States from dissolution and disgrace, not to trifle with it, as it has been trifled with by timid counsels and official

treachery. I dare not say that all this can be done; but sure I am that it is the duty of the Government, and the duty of this House as a responsible part of the Government, to try. The trial must be made, and it should be made; by moderation to the offending States, using none of our great powers unnecessarily for the injury of any of them, but rather for their protection and benefit; by forbearance, until forbearance ceases to be a virtue; by firmness in the execution of the Constitution and laws, so far as the circumstances of the case require; and, amid all the dangers that surround, by ever aiming to be right—always right—though star after star madly shoots from the firmament, and the glorious Federal constellation dissolves in eternal night.

I trust that the grand experiment is not to be a failure; I trust yet in the solid common sense of the people, and to the instinct of self-preservation, yet to be aroused by the consequences of secession and anarchy; I trust yet to the patriotism of the people; but, above all, in an overruling and omnipotent Providence, to preserve, as one people, those He hath so bountifully blest; to bring peace and order out of contention and confusion; and to make this nation for centuries to come, as it has been for almost a century that has passed, the noblest example of liberty and order, and "the republican model of government" for all nations and people.

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